

REMARKS

Claims 1-36 are pending in this application. Attached hereto is a complete listing of all claims in the application, with their current status listed parenthetically. By this Response, claims 1-4, 13-16 and 26-29 have been cancelled without prejudice to later prosecution.

Allowable Claims

In paragraph 16 of the Office Action, the Examiner states that claims 5-7, 17-19 and 30-32 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Applicant amends the claims as follows: Claim 5 comprises claim 4 and its base claim (claim 1). Claim 17 comprises claim 16 and its base claim (claim 13), and claim 30 comprises claim 29 and its base claim (claim 26). Therefore, Applicant submits that claims 5-7, 17-19 and 30-32 are now allowable. In addition, Applicant has amended dependent claims 8-12, 20-25 and 33-36 to now depend from amended independent claims 5, 17 and 30, respectively. Therefore, Applicant submits that claims 8-12, 20-25 and 33-36 are also now allowable, as they depend from allowable independent claims.

Applicant expressly reserves his right under 35 U.S.C. § 121 to file one or more divisional or continuation applications directed to the cancelled subject matter during the pendency of this application, or an application claiming the benefit of this application under 35 U.S.C. § 120.

In the Abstract

In paragraphs 1-2 of the Office Action, the Examiner objects to the Abstract as it is not descriptive of the subject matter claimed. In response, Applicant cancels the originally-submitted Abstract, and submits a new Abstract that describes the claimed subject matter. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw this objection.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd paragraph

In paragraphs 4-5 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claim 24 as being indefinite, as it depends from itself. In response, Applicant has amended the claim to now depend from claim 17. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Claim Objection

In paragraph 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner objects to claim 5 as it recites “base don.” Applicant has amended the claim to now recite “based on.”

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In paragraphs 7-8 of the Office Action, pending claims 1-2, 11-14, 23-27 and 36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,650,910 (“Mazur”). As discussed below, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 1-2, 13-14 and 26-27 has been canceled, making the rejection of these claims moot. In addition, Applicant has amended dependent claims 11-12, 23-25 and 36 to now depend

from amended independent claims 5, 17 and 30, respectively. Therefore, Applicant submits that claims 11-12, 23-25 and 36 are now allowable, as they depend from allowable independent claims.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In paragraphs 9-15 of the Office Action, claims 3-4, 8-10, 15-16, 20-22, 28-29 and 33-35 stand rejected as unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) selectively in view of U.S. patents: Mazur; 5,926,503 ("Kelton"); and 5,633,889 ("Schilling"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 3-4, 15-16 and 28-29 has been canceled, making the rejection of these claims moot. In addition, Applicant has amended dependent claims 8-10, 20-22 and 33-35 to now depend from amended independent claims 5, 17 and 30, respectively. Therefore, Applicant submits that claims 8-10, 20-22 and 33-35 are now allowable, as they depend from allowable independent claims.

Conclusion

Applicant believes that this Response has addressed all items in the Office Action and now places the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance of claims 5-12, 17-25 and 30-36 at an early date is solicited. A fee for a three month extension of time is enclosed with this response. Should any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date


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